



MINUTES

Iowa Learning Technology Study Committee

November 22, 2004

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Jeff Angelo, Cochairperson
Senator Daryl Beall
Senator Robert E. Dvorsky
Senator John Putney
Senator Ron Wieck

Representative Carmine Boal, Cochairperson
Representative Swati Dandekar
Representative Rod Roberts
Representative Cindy Winckler

MEETING IN BRIEF

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- I. Procedural Business.
- II. College Community School District — Mr. Alan Rowe.
- III. Department of Education — Mr. Jeff Berger.
- IV. Committee Discussion.
- V. Recommendations.
- VI. Written Documents on File With the Legislative Services Agency.



Iowa Learning Technology Study Committee

I. Procedural Business.

Call to Order. The third of three meetings of the Iowa Learning Technology Study Committee was called to order by Cochairpersons Senator Jeff Angelo and Representative Carmine Boal at 10:06 a.m., Monday, November 22, 2004, in Room 116 of the State Capitol Building in Des Moines, Iowa.

Preliminary Business. Cochairpersons Angelo and Boal thanked members for attending the meeting. Cochairperson Angelo informed the Committee that Ms. Kathleen Hanlon from the Legislative Services Agency had taken attendance.

Adjournment. The meeting recessed for lunch at 11:50 a.m., reconvened at 12:04 p.m., and adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

II. College Community School District – Mr. Alan Rowe.

Internet Portal. Cochairperson Angelo recognized Mr. Alan Rowe, Executive Director of Learning Services for the College Community School District located in Cedar Rapids. Mr. Rowe reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that illustrated the district's "PrairePride" Internet learning portal, and discussed how teachers and administrators use it. The portal's learning tools support professional practices and result in increased and more efficient use of student data, including achievement, discipline, and achievement measures; more effective professional learning practices; and an increased sharing of teaching tools and strategies. The district establishes and reviews measurables to determine if professional development efforts are achieving the intended "USE" (Use of best practices, Sharing level among colleagues, and Effect on student achievement and teacher quality) results. He emphasized that technology must be "SIF"-compliant, meaning it must be compatible with the school's interoperability framework.

Information Service Plan. Mr. Rowe stated that the district has moved beyond the technology plan required by the state to developing an information service plan, which focuses on attendance, behavior, and academics. The district has created standards of performance, uses common definitions so that data can be interpreted in the same manner, and employs clearly defined achievement growth indicators. Technology accelerates the information teachers can use to meet student needs. Isolation is a barrier to school improvement, and while teachers often know what tools are available to help achieve improvement, they do not have the time or opportunity to avail themselves of the tools. The district maintains a library of best practices. The district has hosted more than 50 other school districts which have come to study its achievements.

Committee Questions. Cochairpersons Angelo and Boal invited members of the Committee to ask questions.



Information Service Plans. In response to a question by Cochairperson Angelo, Mr. Rowe commented that the district has received little or no help from its area education agency (AEA) in its technology efforts. He emphasized the importance of developing an information service plan, and that technology investment must be centered around the end user in the classroom.

Internet Access. In response to a question by Representative Dandekar, Mr. Rowe stated that 90 percent of his district's families have Internet access. He stated that parents demand access to the school district as customers would demand service from a business. He emphasized the importance of teachers engaging in dialogue about improving practices. He also discussed the importance of introducing parents to technology in school and especially the district's use of the Internet during periods when parents and students regularly communicate, such as parent-student conferences.

Community and Technology Management. As part of a discussion with Senator Dvorsky, Mr. Rowe stated that the district serves 3,700 students. He noted that the popular perception is that the community school primarily serves an affluent suburban community. However, he explained that when accounting for the growth of the area's student population, the district's special education "move-in" rate is three times the average, 25 percent of its students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and approximately 100 students come from homeless families. He noted that the district truly is a "community school," acting as the Internet service provider to the community for 10 years. He stated that the community expects access to the district. Mr. Rowe emphasized the importance of developing a business model in which parents are the district's customers. He also reiterated the importance of establishing a leadership team composed of at least the superintendent, business manager, curriculum director, web master, community relations specialist, volunteer coordinator, and the technology specialist.

Financing. In response to a question by Representative Winckler, Mr. Rowe stated that the installation of technology should be treated as a utility. As part of his discussion with Senator Dvorsky, Mr. Rowe noted that the district has successfully passed 22 of its last 24 bond issues. He continued by recommending the formation of a "data academy" to support school districts and that the physical plant and equipment levy (Iowa Code § 298.2) be revised to allow districts to buy technology hardware with preloaded software. Cochairperson Boal and Mr. Rowe discussed the relationship between student achievement and technology. He noted that student achievement is tied to instruction, and that technology accelerates how students plan their day and access information.

Teacher Development. Representative Roberts and Mr. Rowe discussed methods for using technology. Representative Winckler and Mr. Rowe discussed the importance to professional development, and explained a policy to delay the school daily start time to 8:40 a.m. to aid



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teachers by giving them more time to collaborate. Senator Beall and Mr. Rowe discussed the idea of establishing a data academy on a statewide basis.

III. Department of Education — Mr. Jeff Berger.

Cochairperson Angelo recognized Mr. Jeff Berger, Legislative and Policy Liaison for the Department of Education. Mr. Berger noted that the state does not utilize a consistent nomenclature when referring to technology issues. He discussed the progress of the department's Technology Advisory Committee (see minutes for the November 5th meeting). He stated that the State Board of Education is gathering additional information to improve the state's knowledge base regarding educational technology and its use in Iowa's K-12 system. Because the Technology Advisory Committee is still formulating its survey, he suggested that the Committee could request changes to the advisory committee's survey. He concluded by stating that the department relies upon Learning Point Associates, located in Chicago, as a clearinghouse for educational technology information (see <http://www.learningpt.org>). He stressed the importance of providing a clear direction to the Technology Advisory Committee.

IV. Committee Discussion.

Cochairpersons Angelo and Boal invited Committee discussion.

Proposals. As part of the discussion, Cochairperson Angelo distributed recommendations suggested by Mr. Jon Hueser, a presenter from the second Committee meeting. Senator Beall distributed a draft recommendation for a state appropriation of \$250,000 for an Iowa Learning Technology Pilot Program which would provide competitive grants to school districts that meet specified standards. Cochairperson Boal distributed proposed recommendations to establish a student achievement learning technology initiative using one-to-one student learning technology (i.e., providing laptop computers to students) through public-private partnerships; identify and coordinate revenue sources for K-12 technology; establish a clearinghouse for purposes of sharing the projects and results of K-12 education technology initiatives occurring in the state; and create a common understanding of the current status of technology in Iowa's classrooms supported by reliable data. Representative Roberts proposed the creation of a research park, to be located perhaps at the University of Northern Iowa, which could develop intellectual property of value to school districts across the nation. Representative Winckler identified a need to develop a matrix showing where districts are in efforts to integrate technology in the classroom and that would identify phases for reaching the optimum level.

Comments and Discussion. During the discussion, Committee members responded to the proposals and made a number of related comments. Cochairperson Angelo stated that it is important to provide policymakers with a general direction. Cochairperson Boal emphasized



the charge of the Committee and the need to improve student achievement. Representative Roberts stressed the need to encourage innovation. Representative Dandekar discussed the importance of measuring results and ensuring accountability through the use of standards or benchmarks. Committee members discussed the feasibility of implementing a one-to-one policy goal and providing a degree of flexibility, especially given the amount of diversity among school districts and the differing levels reached by school districts in incorporating technology as a part of their administration and curriculum. Members discussed the importance of establishing a multiyear program in which stakeholders are involved in the financing of projects which encourage experimentation among school districts, within specific parameters, in order to achieve measurable results in academic performance, together with the establishment of a data collection point or clearinghouse of best practices. Senator Beall emphasized the importance of providing school districts with small competitive grants. Representative Dandekar noted the need for public-private partnerships and Cochairperson Boal discussed the importance of providing financing on the basis of a local match of funds. There was a general discussion concerning the need to encourage professional development, including devoting time each day for teacher collaboration. Cochairperson Angelo, Cochairperson Boal, and other members discussed whether grant moneys should be used to support professional development. Several members stated that regent institutions should be utilized as a clearinghouse. Representative Winckler and other members discussed the purpose of expanding the scope of technology purchases permissible under the physical plant and equipment levy. There was a consensus that members believe that the expansion should be limited to the purchase of computer hardware, servers, and preloaded software.

V. Recommendations.

After Committee discussion, Chairperson Angelo moved a series of recommendations. Senator Beall and Representative Roberts seconded the motion, which was approved without objection. The Committee approved the following recommendations:

A. Iowa Learning Technology Commission.

The Committee recommended the establishment of an Iowa Learning Technology Commission, composed of stakeholders, to administer a student achievement learning technology initiative to be implemented through local and public-private partnerships that may include, but is not limited to, using one-to-one student learning technology.

B. Pilot Program to Encourage Innovation.

The Committee recommended the establishment of a pilot program, to be administered by the commission to encourage innovation, increase student achievement, and ensure that technology is used on the basis of best practices. The pilot program should be designed to obtain valid and reliable evidence of student achievement success using technology, which may include a "one-to-one" initiative; further demonstrate successful district-to-vendor relationships and possibilities; identify local district educational and fiscal planning and



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implementation strategies; and gain a better understanding of the current status of technology in Iowa schools. The goal of the pilot program is to provide results and additional information necessary for the General Assembly to commit state funds toward implementation of a statewide technology initiative. The pilot program should consist of state-funded competitive grants to Iowa school districts that are matched locally with public or private, federal, state, or local financing as determined by the applicant school district. The pilot program would include the following key components:

1. **Leadership.** Public and private partners should be involved in the development of the planning, implementation, and outcomes for the initiative. Members of a leadership group should include K-12 education and community college and other higher education stakeholders, as well as members of the General Assembly, and representatives from the Governor's Office, business, economic development, technology, and finance.
2. **Focus on Increasing Student Achievement Opportunities Through Quality Teaching and Learning.** This focus on student achievement should include an identification, for purposes of this pilot program as well as for statewide implementation, of the age and developmentally appropriate use of educational technology that will engage the learner and result in improved student achievement opportunities.
3. **Professional Development.** The effective use of technology in the classroom includes quality ongoing professional development.
4. **Curriculum and Assessment.** Students' technology skills should be integrated into the curriculum and assessed through the demonstration of learning within content areas.
5. **Equitable Access.** All Iowa students should have equitable access to education opportunities offered via the use of technology and telecommunications.
6. **Educational Technology Planning.** Consideration should be given to future sustainability of learning technology resources by adapting to future educational needs and technology changes and by avoiding obsolescence of learning technology resources.
7. **Economic Development.** The initiative should foster economic development across all regions of the state and the preparation of students for an economy that embraces technology and innovation.
8. **Accountability.** The focus on accountability should include methods of measuring progress in the areas of increased student engagement; decreased disciplinary problems; increased use of computers for writing, analysis, and research; movement toward student-centered classrooms; increased parental involvement; and increased standardized test scores.



C. Coordination.

The Committee recommended that the commission identify and coordinate current public, private, federal, state, community college, and local revenue sources used for K-12 technology at the school district, area education agency (AEA), and state level as a means of determining the need for renewing state appropriations for technology. It was recommended that the commission collaborate with the Department of Education in this effort.

D. Research Triangle and Clearinghouse.

The Committee recommended the establishment of a research triangle and clearinghouse administered by the Regents universities for purposes of sharing the projects and results of K-12 education technology initiatives occurring in Iowa districts, AEAs, and community colleges and other higher education institutions with the education community within and outside of the state. Dissemination of and access to planning, financing, curriculum, professional development, preservice training, project implementation strategies, and results should be centralized to allow school districts from across the state to gain ideas from each other on integrating technology in the classroom.

E. Technology Inventory.

The Committee recommended that the commission create a common understanding of the current status of technology in Iowa's classrooms supported by reliable data. This should include an accurate assessment of the number of computers and their appropriate corresponding use; costs for hardware, software, staff development, instructional staff, and technology support staff; sources of funds used for technology budgets; and an inventory of curriculum and technology-based K-12 courses. It is recommended that the commission collaborate with the Department of Education on the collection of data and review the data collected by the department prior to starting the pilot program.

F. Levy.

The Committee recommended that the physical plant and equipment levy (Iowa Code § 298.2) be expanded to allow districts to finance the purchase of computer hardware, servers, and preloaded software.

VI. Materials on File With the Legislative Services Agency.

Materials considered at or in connection with the meeting are on file with the Legislative Services Agency and may be accessed from the Committee's Internet page at:

www4.legis.state.ia.us/asp/Internet/Committees/Committee.aspx?id=60

1. Memorandum (cover sheet) prepared by Ms. Kathleen Hanlon, LSA Senior Research Analyst, which included the following:



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- A copy of 2004 Iowa Acts, Chapter 1175, Senate File 2298, sections 242-246, substantially item vetoed by the Governor.
 - A copy of House File 693, which was introduced 4/23/04, but failed to pass out of subcommittee in 2004.
 - An e-mail sent by Mr. Jeff Berger with attached documents, "The Guiding Principles of the State Board Technology Advisory Committee," and "Method of Internet Access by District and Building," November 8, 2004.
 - An e-mail sent by Mr. Jeff Berger with attached document, "State Board Technology Advisory Committee Status Summary," November 17, 2004.
2. PowerPoint presentation of "PrairiePride" web pages, submitted by Mr. Alan Rowe.
 3. "Draft Recommendations for Committee Consideration" submitted by Cochairperson Boal.
 4. Draft legislation submitted by Senator Beall.

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